

Scotland rent consultation customer feedback 2021/22



Here's a summary of what you told us and what we're doing to improve...

Understanding service charges

Some customers asked us to contact them to explain what service charges they're paying. We did this and can also offer customers the chance to get involved in future contract changes if they'd like to. Others were concerned that the service charges were higher than their understanding of inflation, we were able to contact these customers and explain that we only recharge the actual service costs.



219

customers responded to the consultation

Grounds maintenance and communal cleaning

Some had concerns about the quality of grounds maintenance and communal cleaning services. To help solve this issue, we've recently introduced a new process to record every customer contact with housing managers, as well as the outcome of this contact – this will be supported by photo evidence where possible, and we'll discuss any concerns raised with the contractor, making sure they understand your expectations and the required standards. We're also thinking about introducing an environmental improvement budget, where we'd consult with customers across Scotland to identify areas that need investment.

Planned maintenance

Some customers said they would like to have a better understanding of our planned maintenance programme. We've been able to explain our plans to most of these customers, and we're also keen to engage with you at events as soon as it's safe – holding things like customer forums and coffee mornings, to talk about your priorities for a range of areas including planned maintenance.



Electricity charges

Some had concerns about communal electricity charges.

We were able to update customers on work that's already been done, such as introducing low energy usage lights. And based on the suggestion of a customer, we're also investigating the use of sensor lighting, which would be especially beneficial to areas with less natural light.



Repairs

Other customers were concerned about outstanding repairs.

In these instances we either arranged for the repair to be completed immediately, scheduled the repair, or explained how customers could report a repair to us if it wasn't already logged.



Affordability

Some customers were concerned about the affordability of their rent and service charge, particularly during the coronavirus pandemic.



We always aim to comply with the recognised industry standard on affordability (meaning rent and service charges should be no more than 30% of a household's disposable income), and we give new customers the opportunity to do an affordability check before they commit to a new home – this is something we can also help existing customers to complete if they would like to. We're also introducing new ways to support our customers – which includes a financial inclusion team who can offer free, one to one support, to customers worried about money.



We're here to help

If you're struggling or worried about money, remember you're not alone – **just give us a call on 0345 141 4663** and we can chat through your options.